

Spirit of India



Celebrating the richness, diversity and vibrancy of India. Those have been the facets many Indians have wanted to highlight, especially in recent years to the global citizen. A

limited edition book, *The Indians: Interesting Aspects, Extraordinary Facets* by Sumant Batra (Treepie, Rs 8,500) seeks to do the same through a few hundred photographs. It showcases the extraordinary spirit of the country, describing it as a life force that binds this country of more than billion people together. The photographs by Sonhal Nichani bring forth a range of customs, rituals, lifestyles of Indians. The accent is still on exotica, and the photos capture the landscapes of faith coexisting with skyscrapers, of street food and *garam chai*, *dhobi ghats* and *kirana stores*, *paan* and *hookahs*. Representatives of countless small towns and hamlets that dot the vast Indian countryside find place here in this colourful panorama of how India lives.



➤ **The right spirit:** Strings of green chillies and lemon are believed to ward off evil spirit. Shops, offices, vehicles, houses — you can easily spot them just about everywhere



➤ **Fundamental faith:** According to Hindu scriptures there are 330 million gods. Add shrines from other religions. Perhaps a reason why the Indian landscape is densely dotted with places of worship!



◀◀ **Games people play:** Kabbadi, gillidanda, kanche, pithu, cricket and even chess. Indians have the sporting spirit indeed

➤➤ **Mentor matrix:** Gurushishya parampara is still an integral part of India's educational culture for some



◀◀ **On the move:** Street food is the perfect leveller — age, caste, class, sex, no bar

➤➤ **Perfect paradox:** Artificial teeth made of stone. Any takers? In India, one of the world's preferred medical tourism destinations, plenty!



➤ **Bollywood ishtyle:** Indian film stars have a huge fan following. While most set fashion trends, some even enjoy demi god status

◀◀ **Crease chronicles:** Any urban neighbourhood is incomplete without a presswallah and his customary heavy iron with burning coal



➤➤ **Chai garam:** Most Indians can't do without their morning cuppa. And its taste is one thing they don't like to compromise with at any cost

◀◀ **In the name of god:** For many, God is their only source of livelihood

